

Testimony Regarding the FY24 Opening Budget

Mabel Lozano Rodriguez

Hello good evening my name is Mabel Lozano I live in Montgomery Village and my request is that give more funds to the non-profit organization IDENTITY.

Identity is an institution that helps more than 10,000 young people and their families who live in high county poverty, they help them get community resources, provide programs in the schools, give mental health and substance abuse counseling, also work to train parents to be involved in their children's education and to be champions of their success and the success of the community. For me this institution does an extraordinary job.

I came to this country in 2017. At first everything was fine, but after two years of being here without work, my mood was decreasing because I did not leave the house and I did not know anyone in my area because all my family lives in New York, I was alone with my eldest son and my husband, then I had my minor child and because she was unaware of the free child care benefits offered by the county, I had to stay at home taking care of him because my husband could not cover the costs of care of the child and the expenses of the whole house. But everything changed in 2020 when at a meeting at the school where my oldest son attended I met Diana Silva, a young woman who works at identity, and she invited me to an Advocacy program that they offer called Padres Latinos conectados and that was like an injection of life for me, my life gave a radical change, my mood went up 100 percent, because in that program I They taught me that despite not knowing English and living in an unknown country, I was not alone, that I could and can count on them, that program motivated me so much that today I am working as a facilitator in the case management area in the same program that I did with them, thank you to the excellent work that this institution does, the Hispanic population can get ahead in this country despite not knowing how to speak English, but he needs more funds because the Hispanic population every day It grows more and the resources that we fear are not enough to cover all the needs that they have. Thank you .